

AHH 2.7001

**United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region II
POLLUTION REPORT**

Date: Friday, April 24, 2009**From:** Cris Donofrio, Paul Kahn, OSCs**To:** Beckett Grealish, USEPA Region 2, ERRD, Cris D'Onofrio, ERRD-RPB
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Subject: Initiation of Action
Heller Heat Treating
5 Wellington Avenue, Clifton, NJ
Latitude: 40.8842
Longitude: -74.145

POLREP No.:**1 Site #:****Reporting Period:****D.O. #:****Start Date:****Response Authority:****Mob Date:****Response Type:****Completion Date:****NPL Status:****CERCLIS ID #:****Incident Category:****RCRIS ID #:****Contract #****FPN#****Reimbursable Account #**

CERCLA/OPA

Emergency

Non NPL

Removal Action

SDMS Document



110238

Site Description

In early March, 2009, representatives from the Clifton Fire Department ("CFD") asked EPA to accompany them on an inspection of Heller Heat Treating because they suspected that hazardous materials were stored inside the premises. Heller has ceased operations and is in Chapter 7 bankruptcy.

A court-appointed Bankruptcy Trustee is involved and a public auction of the assets is scheduled
[tp://epaossc.net/sites%5C4919%5Cfiles%5Chellerheattreating_polrep_1.htm](http://epaossc.net/sites%5C4919%5Cfiles%5Chellerheattreating_polrep_1.htm)

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for April, 2009. However, CFD officials have determined that the conditions inside the premises are too dangerous to allow the public access for the auction.

On March 10, 2009 OSCs Daly and Kahn accompanied the CFD and reps from the NJDEP on an inspection of the premises.

The following chemicals and hazardous materials were observed to be present at the Site:

- approx. 30,000 gals of used quench oil in totes inside various buildings. An almost equal amount of oil contained in below-grade reservoirs for heat treating furnaces at various locations around the Site.
- one 30-cubic yard roll-off of zinc oxide sludge staged in a parking lot.
- approx 60 drums of zinc oxide sludge.
- approx. 60 drums of good sodium nitrite, and 40 drums of sodium nitrite sludge.
- approx. 400 drums of various chemicals, including solvents, acids, caustics, paint, oxidizers and unknown chemicals.
- two zinc electroplating lines that contain plating chemical residue and sumps that contain hundreds of gallons of unknown chemicals.
- approx 50 fiber drums of elemental zinc balls.
- partially full ammonia and natural gas tanks.
- two below-grade process tanks that contain 170 tons each of molten sodium nitrite.
- open-top metal treatment tanks containing thousands of gallons of liquid and solidified sodium hydroxide.

On March 16, 2009 the Site was referred to EPA for a Superfund removal action by R. VanFossen, Asst. Director of the NJDEP Site Remediation Program.

A more thorough site assessment is planned for April 21, 2009.

Current Activities

As a result of the dangerous conditions at the Site as documented during the EPA inspection on 4/21/2009, on 4/22/09 OSC D'Onofrio obtained verbal funding for \$250,000 and authorization from Deputy Director John LaPadula to initiate an emergency response at the Site with the EPA ERRS contractor.

The Bankruptcy Trustee has signed two access agreements, one for an OPA remediation and one for a CERCLA removal action. OSC D'Onofrio is working on the administrative aspects, funding documentation, and obtaining a site ID#.

Deborah Schwenk in ORC has been assigned to this Site as the lead attorney.

A meeting is scheduled at the Site on 4/24/09 with the Trustee, EPA, and the CFD. The main topic is the possibility of EPA and ERRS initiating some protective measures at the Site, such as segregating unknown chemicals, stringing barrier tape, etc. that could assuage the health and safety concerns of City officials so that the auction could take place prior to the removal of all the chemicals.

Planned Removal Actions

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Mobilize ERRS to the Site as quickly as possible to secure the buildings and begin stabilizing chemical containers. ERRS will immediately switch the utility bills to its name so that natural gas keeping the hot sodium nitrate in liquid form will not be interrupted.

Next Steps

Secure the 5 buildings at the Site. Initiate steps to transfer the 300+ tons of hot (400F) sodium nitrite from the below-grade reservoirs and into containers for disposal.

OSCs will seek OPA funds from the Coast Guard NPFC to address the 30,000 + gallons of used quench oil staged in totes at the Site.

Key Issues

Mobilizing the ERRS crew to the Site and stabilizing the tons of chemicals inside the various buildings.

[epaosc.net/hellerheattreating](http://epaossc.net/hellerheattreating)